

# Manastash Ridge Trails Coalition Meeting Notes

March 7, 2017 | 6:30-8:30pm

DNR Southeast Region Office, 713 Bowers Road, Ellensburg

## In Attendance:

### *Committee Members*

Bradley Gasawski  
Jesse Cunningham  
Kevin Dwight  
Andrea Nesbitt

Anne Merrill-Steskal  
Rob Perkins  
Bruce Simpson  
Noel Knoke

### *Agency Staff*

Cindi Confer Morris  
Nathan Longoria  
Mike Williams  
Stephanie Margheim

## Introductions/Homework Review

- What do you cherish most about the lands in the planning area?
  - Simple access, views
  - One of the best places close to town, accessible from town, easy and quick to get to, convenient
  - Shrub steppe, natural environment, observe plants/animals/birds/flowers, multiple habitats, elk, owls at night
  - Good exercise
  - Good memories
- What are the biggest challenges to be addressed as part of this effort?
  - Making everyone happy – land managers, stakeholders, users
  - Education of trail users about erosion, sustainability issues
  - Re-training users to stay on open trails
  - Managing increased traffic, parking
  - Sustainability in the long term -- 10-15 years from now
  - Trail didn't start as a formalized trail which has lead/can lead to communication and education issues
  - Buy-in from current users
  - Importance of understanding the trails and landscape
- What are the most important goals to be accomplished?
  - Help create a sustainable way to manage and care for trail system, educating locals and users on how to get involved and who to contact about questions, stewardship
  - Accomplish a long term 20-30 year plan
  - Fix trails to become sustainable and make a trail system that makes sense – connectors, re-routes, add/remove trails.
  - Plan like nothing was there and then see how what is there works into that plan.
  - Restoration of some areas to pre-establishment conditions, and building sustainable trails which encourage people to stay on the path.

- As a group, what do we need to understand and learn about as we begin making a plan?
  - Looked at Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, Chelan Conservancy (other community systems), would like to do more research to learn from others - Boulder, CO for example.
  - Need to find out what hikers and bikers like and don't like about the current system
  - See what has been successful at other places and use those ideas here.
  - Do surveys for use and compare it to counter data to get a better feel for total users.
  - Westberg is probably the priority for work and would be a great showcase for positive change.
  - The sensitivity of the ecosystem present, and how best to care for the trails so that future generations can enjoy the trail system.

### **Sign Committee Progress Update**

Informational signage for the kiosk and one at the book about the planning process.

Working with WDFW PR staff on the signs.

Suggestions: put info out to Kittitas County Community Connect (Facebook Group) – someone could share the agency news release to that Facebook page

Signs for trail building (tread lightly, respected access) – should go up before the end of spring break.

The next sign sub committee meeting will be March 30, 2017 1830 at DNR SE Region.

### **Mission Statement Development**

*“Promote safe and sustainable trail recreation opportunities for non-motorized users through public education and cooperation between land managers and user groups while protecting wildlife habitat and natural resources.”*

Updated: *“Promote a safe and sustainable trail network while protecting wildlife habitat and natural resources through education and user cooperation.”*

Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust mission statement was brought up as an example.

The group will come back to this discussion next week to wrap it up.

### **Review Specific Content of Landscape Suitability Assessments**

Suggestions were made to look into the following for the geological analysis/mapping: LiDAR availability, caltopo.com, Forest Practices landslide information

Presented Biological analysis presentation. You can find the [PowerPoint here](#).

### **Future collaboration and volunteer opportunities**

Manual count of users and user types. (late spring/Summer)

Give members GPS to do more ground truthing on the trails inventory (Summer)

### **Set Details for Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be March 28<sup>th</sup> at the DNR building in Ellensburg and we will present and discuss soil maps and the management maps

**Homework Assignment:** Coalition members will do research on community trail systems in other places and present it at the next meeting. For example: “Boulder Open Range” –City of Boulder

### **Meeting Adjourned at 8:30**

